

1923-1998



The Story of Hammer 1923 ~ 1998



DEDICATION

After 75 years of service Hammer Residences, Inc. has had the opportunity to provide programs and services to many individuals.

Our anniversary booklet is dedicated to these people – past, present and future, as well as their families, our committed staff and volunteers and the wonderful supportive community Hammer has called home for most of its 75 years.

We are appreciative of the acceptance, kindness and support we have received and continue to cherish as we commemorate this special milestone of history and service.

Jon Thompson
Chief Executive Officer

75th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We extend our sincere thanks to committee members who helped make this booklet possible.

Marge Barrett	Jim MacLachlan	Jim Ryberg
Nancy Berg	Tim Nelson	Audrey Schultz
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Hammer's Seventeen Oldest Residents

Hammer Residences has served all seventeen individuals pictured below for twenty-five years or more. Three individuals have been at Hammer over fifty years, one person over forty years, nine over thirty years, and four over twenty-five years. These individuals have positively impacted the lives of many staff members throughout the years and represent the reason our organization exists. We are honored to have been a part of their lives.



Pictured: Lynn Vertnik, James McKune, Mike Barrow, Mindy Peterson, Paul Voetmann, Jim Finney, Don Rudd, Ann Bailey, Paula Sorenson, Catherine Burns, Lynn Aase, Peter Ferguson, Jim Davis, Patty Rogers and Andy Scheer Not Pictured: Mark Hempel and David Pierce

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Hammer Residences, Inc. Board of Directors 1997-1998



Pictured: Robert P. Larson, Brad Bainey, Michael F. Cleary, Audrey Schultz, Margaret Argall, Margaret A. Barrett, Robert W. Burmaster, M.D., Robert G. Gunderson, Greg Rye, Arthur Lehmann
Not Pictured: Jerome Tuckner, Nancy Berg, E. Arne Kolbjornsen, D.M.D., Michael A. Urbanic, Father Arnold Weber, O.S.B.

President's Message

Seventy-five years ago a tough but loving lady by the name of Alvina Hammer had a dream for helping the mentally retarded. This year we take time to honor and salute her for holding to that vision.



We have produced this book to commemorate the achievements of the many residents and their families, staff, board members and volunteers who have given so generously of their time and talents.

As president of the board, I take great pride in this year of celebration. Hammer has established a nation-wide reputation for excellence. It has been a leader of innovation in the care of the people with disabilities. Hammer is also recognized by the communities it serves as being a good citizen. Hammer continues to grow because we take our job of caring very seriously.

So as we honor and celebrate our history, we look forward with anticipation to our future.

Michael F. Cleary
President, Board of Directors

Foreword



1923

For seventy-five years, the people at Hammer cared. They opened homes to attend to the developmentally disabled and designed model programs to educate them. They initiated activities insuring the fulfillment of each individual.

Pioneers, these courageous, creative leaders - parents, directors, staff, board members, volunteers, community benefactors - demonstrated a tremendous commitment to the residents, the members of their special family. In this anniversary booklet, we'll follow Hammer's growth from 1923 when two house-mothers took care of four children in the city, to 1998 where over 200 staff members in 22 homes/apartments work with 118 people with developmental disabilities. This is the story of Hammer's people, places and programs. This is the story of a special family, the story of love.



1998

Alvina Hammer begins her journey and caring for children with special needs

People



Alvina Hammer's ideas differed radically from those of her society. In the early 1900's, families and communities were embarrassed and ashamed of their handicapped members; some called them names and hid them away.

Miss Hammer believed individuals with mental retardation had the right to lead lives as normal as possible, and that, in a loving atmosphere, they would feel secure and develop self-confidence.

As a nurse at the Faribault State Hospital and Colony, Miss Hammer saw, and never forgot, the shameful plight of individuals with mental retardation. In 1923, Miss Hammer and her friend Mrs. Robinson rented a home near Minnehaha Falls in Minneapolis. They hired a teacher and began caring for and teaching four children with special needs.

Places

Mrs. Robinson left after one year; Miss Hammer continued on her own. She added three more children to her family and moved to a larger house on Dupont Avenue South. There were few classes offered anywhere for the children society called "feeble-minded," and as news of Hammer School spread, families began bringing their children to

Miss Hammer, placing them in her capable hands. Her next school consisted of two Minneapolis duplexes at Humboldt Avenue and Lake Street. Bill McGlinch and Ralph Rosenvold were two of those who joined this new home. They both stayed with Hammer until their respective deaths in 1978 and 1995.

Programs



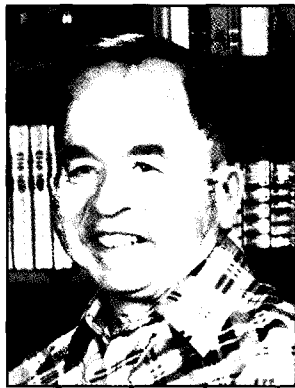
History of teaching special needs

1920's ~ 1930's

During the 1920's, as the school grew in reputation, Miss Hammer married Herman Rutzen, a long time friend. The Rutzens joined together to pursue Alvina's steadfast commitment of caring for the developmentally disabled.



Alvina hired two teachers and three housemothers to care for the children at Humboldt. One of those housemothers was Jenny Malmgren from Norway who worked at Hammer for forty-three years. Diligent and trustworthy, she was a second mom to all. She retired in 1973 and returned to Norway. She died there in 1984.



"I must admit that I did not like the work at first, but as years went by I became very much attached to the children. In other words, I loved them."

Jenny Malmgren



Nora Lund, another teacher, taught for three years, but returned periodically to assist with the summer program.

Jenny Malmgren and Nora Lund, like so many staff members at Hammer, were devoted workers who cared not only for the residents, but for other staff members who they helped train and supervise.



By 1929, Hammer needed more space for the children to roam and play. Mrs. Rutzen purchased a piece of the Drew property outside Wayzata by paying off delinquent taxes. Situated on Superior Boulevard, then a two lane dirt road, now known as Highway 12, this piece of land had once been home to Swanson's Nursery and the Minneapolis Gun Club. For years tangled rose bushes as well as spent shell cases were found on the grounds.

The original house had upstairs sleeping rooms for guests too tired to make the long trip back to Minneapolis by horse and buggy. There was also a beautiful maple dance floor, which served as a place for residents to play, dance and present their Christmas pageants for family and friends.

Hammer begins to see growth –

People

For four years, Mrs. Rutzen maintained the day school in Minneapolis while renovating the “country home” in Wayzata. With no public funding, only parents who paid service fees could send their children to Hammer. Because these parents preferred the country home, the Humboldt school closed in 1932.



That same year Evelyn Carlson arrived at Hammer. She had been a pioneer teacher in a lumber camp in Manitoba, Canada, under conditions so severe she said she suffered nervous breakdowns. Staying with her parents in Minneapolis to recover, she put in an application for the mission field in China.

While waiting to be accepted, she planned to study at the University of Minnesota and to find a job tutoring children. She visited an employment agency and heard about Hammer School. She interviewed there, and even though she had no experience teaching the retarded, Mrs. Rutzen offered her a job for fifty dollars a month, plus room and board. By the time the mission office called, Miss Carlson was already in love with the work and decided to stay.

Places



“The first two weeks were tough. I remember crying at night and thinking, oh dear, I wasn't going to stay here, but finally I think the Lord took me in hand and showed me I needed them as well as they needed me. So from then on, it was fine.”

Evelyn Carlson

Programs

- both in residents and buildings

1930's



The Depression years proved very difficult financially. Evelyn Carlson and Jenny Malmgren could only take every fourth Sunday off and many months their salaries dropped to five dollars. Mrs. Rutzen sometimes even borrowed from her staff, once asking Miss Carlson for a hundred dollars to buy two thousand pounds of potatoes for the winter. Miss Carlson obtained the money from her father.

Many of the residents were severely retarded but were still taken into the classroom for a limited time each day. Not having many teaching materials available, nor money to buy any, Miss Carlson improvised, designing sight and hand recognition exercises for each student. Always a pioneer, much of what she developed became tools and practices for teachers in the field.



By 1933, with twenty-one residents, the school bursting its seams, day cots were set up in the playroom for sleeping. Everybody enjoyed the

spacious country surroundings, especially the orchard with Nelly, the old gray mare, who ate so many apples her teeth fell out. The ravine below the orchard turned into a popular skating rink in the winter. Mrs. Rutzen grew a huge garden.



As Hammer grew, its influence

People



The lack of funds in the 1930's made it difficult to carry on. It was a struggle to hire enough staff. Many families had to withdraw their children since they could no longer afford the thirty-five dollars a month fee.

Mrs. Rutzen went to Hennepin County for help. The county was then looking for "holding" places until Faribault State Institution could offer room for all those waiting for care. Florence Greiner, a competent and compassionate Hennepin County social worker, agreed to place some people with mental retardation at Hammer.

Places

Mabel was one of the first persons placed at Hammer by the County. She had Down's Syndrome and was thought to be uncommunicative until the staff tried to cut her hair and she bellowed out a rich assortment of "cuss" words. Another boy placed by the county was described by Miss Carlson as a sweet little angel who sat in the tub singing "Twinkle, twinkle, little star."

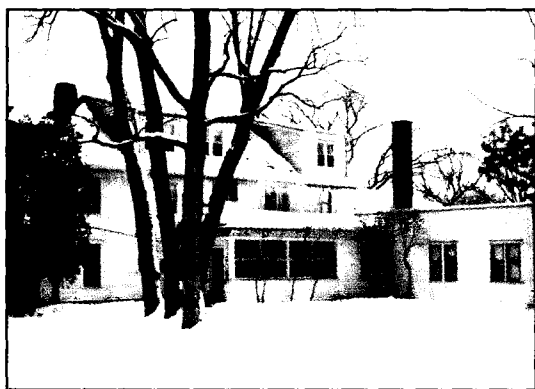


Bernice, pictured on the far left, an undernourished, speechless girl, about ten years old, was not expected to live. Evelyn Carlson took her for many walks, encouraging her to speak. A year later, Bernice tried to say a word, then never stopped talking. When she came to Hammer, her IQ was stated as very low, but she proved to be an intelligent child who learned quickly.

Programs

Times changed for the better in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Parents began looking for a place for their children once again. A waiting list was soon established. Applications for residency at Hammer came from all over the country as well as Canada, England, Mexico and South America.

e spread nationwide – Arc formed 1930's ~ 1940's



"Everything was not work. There were many joyful times at Hammer. All ages came together. There was no segregation based on age or capability. It was our thought that in the everyday world, we meet all ages and we must learn to live together."

Evelyn Carlson

In 1946, Hammer parents organized the Association of Friends of Mentally Retarded Children, later known as MARC (Minneapolis Association for Retarded Citizens). This group was a wellspring of the National Association of Retarded Children, Arc. Reuben T. Lindh, who was to become the first President of MARC, recalled its formation.



"Miss Carlson was a member of the AAMD [American Association on Mental Deficiency] and was groping for means of helping all retarded people. Shortly before Christmas in 1946, her plans included a meeting of all parents for a Christmas party. At that meeting, a Mrs. St. Amant from Ely, Minnesota suggested that we have a type of PTA organization...In the summer of 1947 we called a meeting at our home, under the apple tree at 2908 29th Avenue South. I placed an ad in the Minneapolis Star Journal asking any parent to come to the meeting."

Reuben T. Lindh

Miss Carlson takes over Hammer

In attendance at this 1947 PTA meeting was another friend of Hammer, Miss Mildred Thompson, who supervised the Department of the Mentally Deficient and Epileptic in the Minnesota Department of Public Welfare.

*"By 1947, Mr. Lindh and those he represented were assuming real leadership in bettering conditions for those with retardation."
Mildred Thompson*

Miss Thompson shared her statewide contacts with Mr. Lindh as he traveled from town to town building a coalition. Miss Carlson remembered the Hammer folks "chipping in one or two dollars" for Reuben to go around the state. Reuben Lindh was also called on to speak to professional groups working with the mentally deficient outside Minnesota. Moreover, he chaired for twenty years the Cedric Adam's Drive which gave away gifts to children in institutions. He served as the President of Hammer's board for thirteen years. He also played the Hammer School Santa Claus each year.



Mrs. Rutzen turned over administrative duties to Evelyn Carlson in 1947. Suffering from ill health, Mrs. Rutzen continued living in the cottage which she had built. She watched the younger children, did relief work and shopped for the school until 1959 when she suffered a heart attack. She was hospitalized, then later moved to a nursing home where she died in 1966.



Miss Carlson became Director and Proprietor of Hammer in 1947 and remained in that capacity until 1974. Under her guidance, Hammer expanded, acquiring additional property, implementing new programs and adding a significant number of new family members.

*"We saw the need, and we went ahead and did it."
Evelyn Carlson*

People

Places

Programs


- expansion continues

1940's ~ 1950's

The first years of ownership were preoccupied with house repairs. Miss Carlson had to put on a new roof and add a new well and furnace to the old house. She stayed in a room in the old main building so she could be called on for emergencies. Late one night, Mrs. Malmgren came to tell her there was no heat. Miss Carlson put on her light blue robe and dashed over. Finding the problem with the furnace, there was nothing to do but enter the bin and start shoveling coal. With the light of one small drop fixture and the flame from the open furnace, Mrs. Malmgren said Miss Carlson "looked like an angel in hell."

Miss Carlson's father helped with repairs, improvements and additions, giving hours of volunteer service to Hammer. Miss Carlson's mother acted like "a grandma to the kids," bringing home-made treats to share with them.




STATE OF MINNESOTA
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
SAINT PAUL 1

ORVILLE L. FREEMAN
GOVERNOR

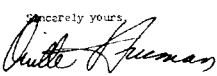
August 4, 1958

Dear Mr. Winslow:

I have now received a complete report from the Commissioner of Highways relative to the Hammer School at Wayzata.


Let me say, first of all, that I was deeply impressed by your note and I certainly can appreciate your concern, as well as that of the school administration, relative to possible highway infringement. The Commissioner of Highways, Mr. L. P. Zimmerman, was formerly the Hennepin County Engineer and he is therefore cognizant of the school's problem and is familiar with the details of the area. While the Department has not made a final determination on routes in that area, the Commissioner has stated that every effort is going to be made to save the property from damage and that the children will be more than adequately protected from the highway by strong fencing, constructed by the Department if and when the highway is built on this time. While this is not very specific information, it is all that is available at this time.

I hope this has been helpful to you.

Sincerely yours,


Mr. F. H. Winslow, Vice President
State Bond and Mortgage Company
New Ulm, Minnesota

cc: Edward A. Nierenwarten, New Ulm



In 1948, Miss Carlson lobbied the Highway Commission and encouraged letters from parents asking that the proposed Highway 12 extension on Superior Boulevard not cut through Hammer property. This request was granted.

As time went on, more and more families found Hammer to be the place for their children. The number of residents continued to grow, from twenty-six in 1954 to sixty-one in 1974.

Residents worked, learned and as model program

People



Many innovative programs were developed for the growing family. The popular craft shop, staffed by Phyllis Stordahl, was in business for thirty years, from 1954 until 1984 when Phyllis retired. Students sold decorations and cards at the art fairs in Excelsior and Wayzata. Mary Bussey joined the crafts program to teach weaving. She in turn taught Virginia Kuechle who worked with looms and weavers until 1978. On her trip to Scandinavia in 1963 Miss Carlson visited international weaving centers for ideas to incorporate into Hammer's successful program. The "Hammer School Weavers," proudly wearing their weaver buttons, made and sold an unbelievable number of rugs and placemats.

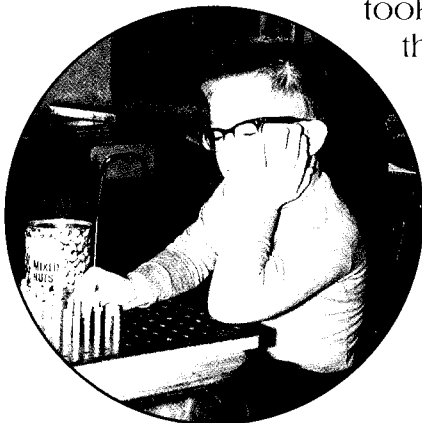
Places

Some students learned to type from Gladys Bergstrom. Others performed in dance taught by Alice Tynan. The bedrock program, of course, continued to be the classroom. Phyllis Stordahl told the story of when she took classes one summer at the University of Minnesota and her professor expressed disbelief that she could teach the retarded to read. She told him to "come and see." For several years, the school



took in day pupils from the surrounding area since there were no classes offered in the district schools. Several of these students became permanent members of the Hammer family.

Programs



had fun – Hammer reputed

1950's ~ 1960's



Hammer continued to be a model for programs throughout the developmental disabilities field. All those involved – school personnel, program directors, secretaries, bookkeepers, kitchen, laundry and maintenance workers, relief staff – carried out Alvina Hammer Rutzen's belief that a loving atmosphere fosters growth and development.

In addition, there were specially trained residents: Ralph Rosenvold in gardening, Donna Mae Patnode who helped Mrs. Malmgren for many years in the Women's and Girls' Units, the twins Margaret and Muriel Bushaw who helped in the kitchen and with housekeeping and Grace Larson who helped Miss Addie Brady, the housemother for the Men's and Boys' Units.

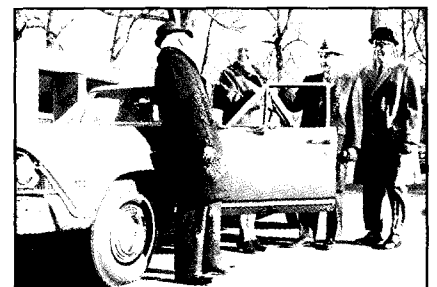


And then there were the volunteers who helped – young and old, professional and non-professional, doctors, nurses, those from service organizations, churches, commercial banks, stores, etc. When Marilyn Larson became the Volunteer Director in 1968, she enlarged the volunteer staff. So did Joyce Doucette and Virginia Kuechle who followed as Volunteer Directors. All programs were enriched by their efforts.

"There could be no other community in the country who gave so willingly."
Evelyn Carlson.



There were special gifts. Village Chevrolet and Bill Bloomer gave a new station wagon to the school in 1958 and each year following. The Minnetonka Lions' Club provided a small bus for those who needed transportation to Opportunity Workshop.



Hammer School changed to non-dedicate newly built dormitory

People

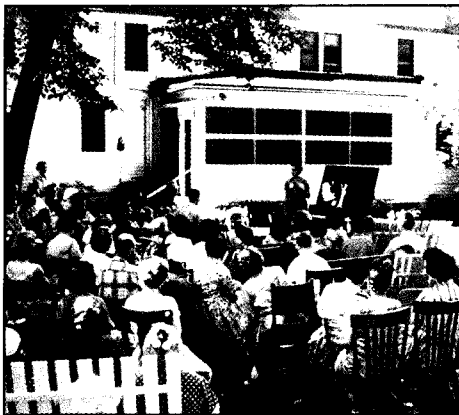


From 1967 to 1972, while Tom Lanenberg was manager of Country Kitchen in Wayzata, he invited "his friends" to come there for a meal. He planned special activities for those who had no place to go for Christmas.

Beginning in 1962 and continuing for some ten years, members of the Vagabond Motorcycle Club roared over to give rides to the residents. In later years the Long Lake Snowmobile Club also provided rides for the residents' delight and excitement.



Places



And always, there were the parents supporting the changes. On Family Day in June, 1959, Miss Carlson began talking seriously of reorganizing. It was evident that extensive repairs would be needed on the old building. She was pushed to a decision by the state fire marshal who told her Hammer would have to install a sprinkler system or close down.

On Family Day in June, 1960, architectural drawings for Hammer's expansion were displayed. In September, neighbors signified their approval and the Farmers and Mechanics Bank let a mortgage on October 1, 1960.

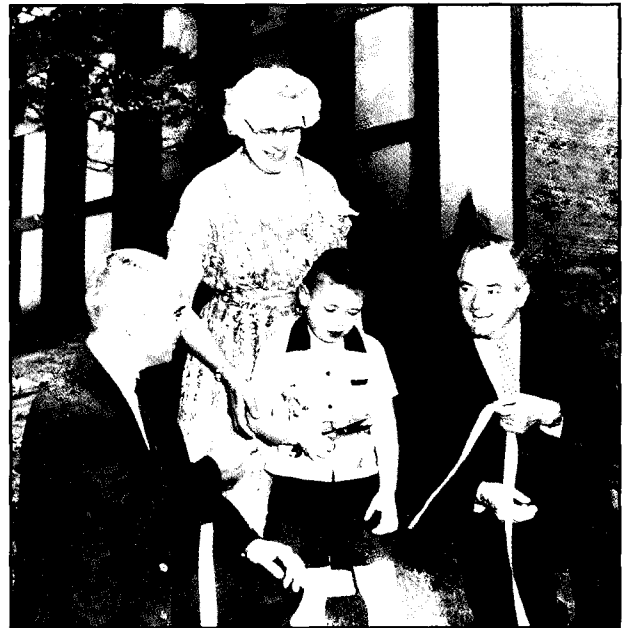
At a special meeting of all parents on June 18, 1960, Hammer School changed to a non-profit corporation. The first Board of Directors was formed. Reuben Lindh was elected as President and Everett Taylor as Secretary and Treasurer.

"This is the way those parents were, they came forward, and they never said no; they were always there. So between parents and staff, why, I really had a good time of it". Evelyn Carlson

Programs

Non-profit corporation – Humphreys 1960's

In December, 1960, ground breaking for the first dormitory took place. Francis Coakley Ames, the State Director of Services for the Retarded in Minnesota, and the guest of honor, remarked that Hammer School was the first non-profit facility to expand. The West Dormitory cost \$92,000. The loan was paid off in four years by contributions from parents and organizations. Much of the interior painting was done by volunteers, many of them parents. Miss Carlson mixed the paints. Hubert L. Humphrey dedicated the building. And from that time on, he and his wife Muriel, became good friends of Hammer.



Soon after the dormitory was built it became apparent that even more space was needed. In

1963, the Board of Directors
bought three acres with a



house and a garage from Mr. Blanco, the neighbor on Hammer's east side. Hammer called the house the Annex. It was used for additional classroom space and cooking and weaving classes. The garage of the Annex was used for a unique gardening project. The Wayzata Garden Club, headed by Mrs. Pat Clarke, had been planting flowers along the walks of the property for some time. In 1964, they worked out a program where the students could learn from planting themselves. Mr. Spencer Smith of Orono Gardens Greenhouse taught the students how to grow seedlings in the warming beds Everett Taylor had built on the upper floor of the garage. The Hammer Greenhouse grew from

that small beginning. With the proceeds of the garden projects and other donations, the Garden Club built a well-equipped separate building. The program served as a model for other facilities around the nation. Spencer Smith received a Distinguished Service Award from the Minnesota State Horticultural Society for his contributions.

Later, when academic and weaving programs moved back to the main building, the first group home was set up in the Annex with four young women living downstairs. The upstairs housed five women in a semi-independent living unit.

In 1965, a food service building was added to the main building, containing a dining room, kitchen, storage spaces and a reception hall. Administrative offices were added in 1966 financed by an uncle of one of the residents.

Grant helps build another dorm new regulations begin

People

Miss Carlson received a grant from the Kennedy Foundation in 1966 to build another dorm. In awarding the grant, Mrs. Eunice Kennedy Shriver told Miss Carlson that Hammer was the first small residential facility in the country to be chosen. A recreation room was designed for the lower walk-out floor of the East Dorm. This was dedicated to the memory of Margaret King, a resident who died in 1967.



A recreational addition was proposed in 1969. Mr. Bert Gamble offered to pay one-half the cost of a large swimming pool if Hammer could come up with the rest. Almost immediately, his bid was met.

Places



The final building on the Hammer campus, built in 1974, was named after Evelyn Carlson. The Carlson House, dedicated at Family Day in June, 1974, consisted of eight double apartments and a six-bed group home.

Activities continued. Tom Tynan and Sherman Malmstrom, followed by Tom Lanenberg, carried out a woodworking program producing innumerable bird houses and bread boards until a fire destroyed the workshop in 1976.

Mrs. Vos from Plymouth started a 4-H Club in 1968. The Hammer School Helpers proudly exhibited their work at county fairs.

Under the leadership of Reverend A. Keiski and Jim Solinger, a Boy Scout troop and Cub Pack formed in 1970. The fellows were very proud of their uniforms.

Mary Nordenstrom, a physical education instructor, trained students for the Special Olympics. Many students received gold medals in regional games. Mary accompanied Joe Harrington and Alden Keiski to the first International Olympics in Chicago in 1969. Joe Harrington, sponsored by the North Stars, went to Toronto for the international games and participated in floor hockey in 1971.



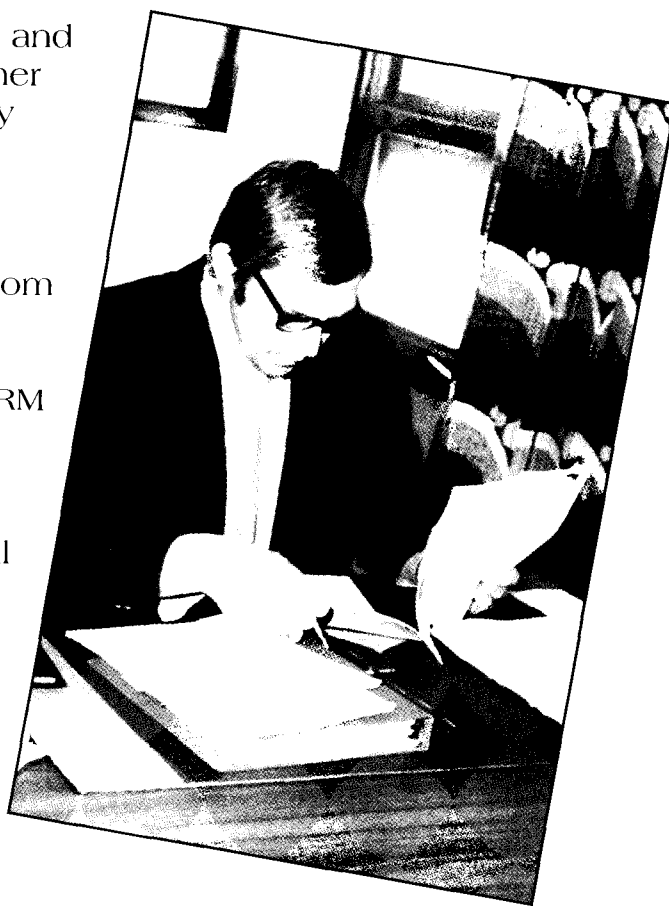
Programs

History – Miss Carlson retires – 1960's ~ 1970's

In 1974, new regulations were set by the state and federal governments. The state certified Hammer as an Intermediate Care Facility for the Mentally Retarded and asked for detailed reports on its administration. The state monitored the facility carefully, scrutinizing the costs for services.

To deal with the barrage of questions arising from the new regulations, Hammer helped form an organization in 1974, the Association of Residences for the Retarded in Minnesota. ARRM consisted of administrators of facilities, along with other knowledgeable people, who discussed problems and sought legislation. ARRM has done much at the state and national level to improve services for people with developmental disabilities.

It had been apparent to Miss Carlson for some time that she needed to make another change. After prayer and consultation, she gave over the administration in May, 1974, to Merlyn Larson who had worked at Hammer for seven months.



"I decided it was time to leave. Although it was the hardest decision I've ever made, it was terrible. It was just terrible. In fact, even now, I wish I was twenty years younger."

Evelyn Carlson

Miss Carlson had supervised the tremendous physical growth of the Hammer family. In a thirteen year period, from 1960 – 1973, the plant size grew from eight thousand to forty-five thousand square feet. In twenty-seven years of leadership, Miss Carlson guided her family in many diverse changes and choices of programs. As a teacher of fifteen years, she was a pioneer in the field of developmental disabilities. Miss Carlson gave forty-two years of extraordinary service.

Many changes in admissions, and activities for residents

People



Merlyn Larson served as Executive Director of Hammer from 1974 – 1985. He lived for several years in the cottage Mrs. Rutzen had built. Before coming to Hammer, Mr. Larson studied social work at the University of Minnesota and worked as a house parent for Lutheran Social Services. He had spent a few years in the business world with Dun & Bradstreet and in public relations at Golden Valley Lutheran College. He was an assistant director, then later the director of Outreach Community Center, a large Minneapolis facility for adults.

The new regulations that took place soon after Merlyn Larson became Executive Director prompted Hammer to develop individual program plans for each resident. Mr. Larson believed the basic principle in any area of human services was, *“dealing with a person who has a problem. That is, the person is foremost, the problem comes second.”*

Places

At this time the procedure that led to admission to Hammer included an interview with the family and the prospective resident, a study of the applicant's history and a review by the Hammer intake committee.

The committee was made up of staff members, board members and a doctor. It put together an individualized plan of treatment. It included a list of any medications, input from the resident's doctor and dentist, an assessment of the resident's capabilities and needs and a plan of action.

Programs

Financial arrangements at the time of a resident's admission included the family's ability to pay, but most often came from a welfare department or social security. The cost per day, covering operational expenses, was usually paid out of county or state funds. As always, financial status did not affect eligibility to attend Hammer, nor did race, color, creed or origin.



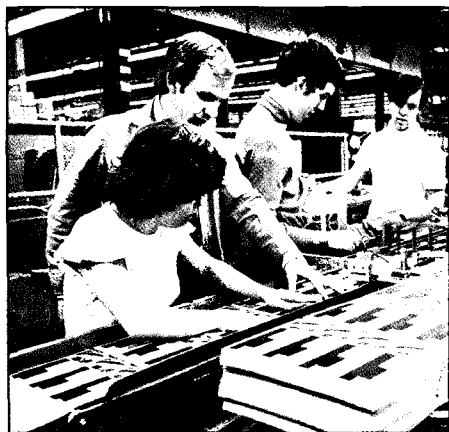
training, work

1970's

Hammer's guiding philosophies were based on the "normalization principle," directed toward enabling a handicapped person's life to be as normal as possible. Merlyn Larson described normalization as a concept which originated in the Scandinavian countries, changing the way services were provided to the developmentally disabled. It emphasized the importance of the retarded as persons with individual needs.



Hammer's academic program included classes on the premises for residents aged five to thirteen. Older children to age twenty-one went by bus to the Cooperative School Rehabilitation Center at Glen Lake, an organization providing academic, vocational and socialization programs. Older residents attended Day Activity Centers, Work Activity Centers or Sheltered Workshops for job training geared to their ability. Still others trained for assembly-line work or janitorial, food or housekeeping services at vocational-technical schools such as Opportunity Workshop in Richfield. Five residents competitively worked in the area, at a Mr. Steak restaurant, a florist shop, a typewriter repair company and a nursing home.



The Minnesota Legislature decreed in 1975 that public school systems must take on the responsibility for the

academic education and training of those with retardation. For these services Hammer contracted with the school districts in which the students' families lived.

Each morning the residents left Hammer to return back home about four-o'clock in the afternoon. It was on evenings and weekends that most of the staff work was done. After free time and dinner, a great variety of activities took place. Self-care skills were taught. Counseling sessions were held. Students received help with homework. The direct-care staff had grown to forty-three.



Independent living programs into becomes Hammer Residences,

People

Recreational groups went bowling or cross-country skiing or horseback riding. In the summer, there was vegetable gardening, camping or swimming in Hammer's pool. The Hammer Iron Team, a weight lifting club, trained at the Ridgedale YMCA. The team members displayed their body building in public performances demonstrating "ability rather than disability."



Adults living in the group home prepared the evening meal, cleaned their quarters, did laundry and relaxed together. In addition, the apartment dwellers, who lived two-by-two, also planned their menus with assistance. Residents were taken weekly by volunteers to buy groceries; they learned to count and handle their money. They had as much freedom as they could handle, determined by staff, parents and the residents themselves. This living environment continues in a similar manner today.

Places



Local churches and businesses, as always, were enormously important to the atmosphere and success of Hammer. One-to-one relationships was a new goal and volunteers formed friendships with individual residents. Social occasions included dinners, fishing, ball games or movies.

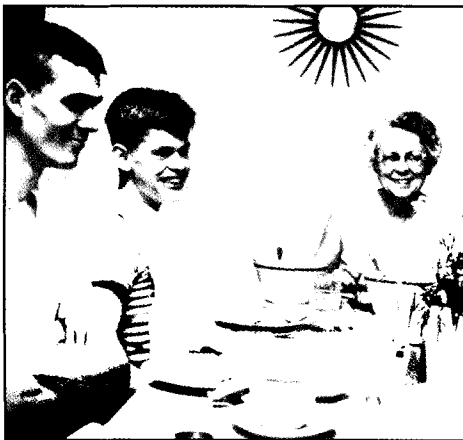
Programs

Maintenance of the buildings persisted as Hammer's greatest problem. The state fire marshal declared that the core building, used now just for classrooms, had to go. To replace it, the Board of Directors, in September, 1974, decided on a capital funds campaign. A goal of eight hundred thousand dollars was planned.

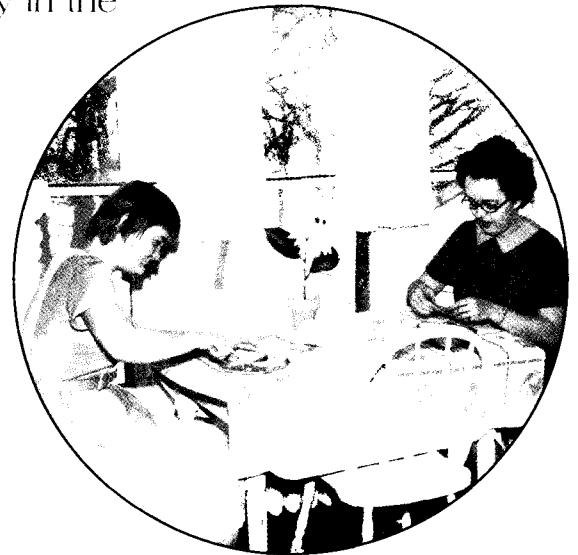
roduced – Hammer School Inc. 1970's

The fundraising committee, including Mrs. Kate Budd, Mrs. Pat Clarke and Merlyn Larson began the campaign with a brochure they sent to foundations, families and prospective givers.

The old house did come tumbling down. In 1976, Miss Carlson returned to see the demolition. She remarked that Ralph Rosenvold and Bill McGlinch watched with tears rolling down their cheeks. Everybody felt sad again that year when the greenhouse froze out and its use was discontinued.



In 1978, Hammer School became Hammer Residences, Inc., relinquishing formal education to the local school districts. Hammer continued its emphasis on residential programs that were designed to help people live successfully in the community.



Individualized services and norm

People

During Mr. Larson's tenure, Hammer was licensed to have sixty-eight residents, including children and adults. There were many individuals on the waiting list. Families heard about Hammer just as they had in the past, by word-of-mouth. Residents were now also referred by county case workers. Most of the residents had close family contacts. They went home frequently.



Places

Families also kept in touch by reading *Happenings*, a quarterly newsletter begun in 1980. The *Happenings* kept everyone up to date with a letter from the director, stories from the Gleason Lake Residence, the Annex Group Home, the Carlson Group Home and Apartment Training, the Men's and Boys' Units, the Women's and Girls' Units, Arts and Crafts as well as a report from the Board of Directors.

Programs



Nationally, enormous changes were taking place in the approach to developmental disabilities during this period – normalization, federal regulations, an increased volume of literature in the field. Merlyn Larson and the Hammer family made changes with a persistent faith in the original philosophy of love and respect.



"The most important thing a staff person has to do is establish a love relationship with the residents. In that atmosphere, we have a real concern for testing that person to his full potential."

Merlyn Larson

The next years proved to be most challenging. Perpetuating Hammer's reputation as a pioneer in the field of developmental disabilities, Roger Deneen was instrumental in opening the door for the provision of further individualized services and normalization for the residents.

Mr. Deneen had previously been part of the Hammer family as the first male resident counselor. He and his wife Melissa became the first program managers. They also were houseparents in the Carlson Group Home. Their two oldest daughters were born while the family lived at Hammer.

In 1979, after completing his Masters degree, Mr. Deneen left Hammer to direct the Pine County Developmental Achievement Center (DAC) for four years. He was also involved in the Minnesota DAC Association, the Governor's Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities and in the state legislative process. Mr. Deneen was knowledgeable on the federal changes in day programs and residential legislation and regulation. He returned to Hammer in 1983 to the position of Director of Programs. In 1985, he was appointed Executive Director.



By 1985, de-institutionalization (the push to transfer the developmentally disabled into community-based facilities) had become an all encompassing policy based on a major attitudinal change. Experts believed that no one needed to live in institutions of any kind. That included regional centers and even community-based intermediate facilities that housed only several dozen residents. It also included the most severely disabled.

Downsizing happens – Homes community neighborhoods

People

The smaller-is-better trend went a step further. The Legislature ordered a moratorium on new intermediate care facilities. In 1984, Minnesota was approved for a federal waiver that allowed it to begin a new system. By 1987, one thousand people were receiving these “waivered services.” More than a third of them were in group homes, which could have no more than six residents. Homes for children could have no more than three. Also part of the trend were state grants to help the developmentally disabled live in apartments under the “semi-independent living services” program.



Places

Hammer, as usual, led in the field. Taking the initiative before it was a prerequisite, in 1986, the Board of Directors voted to close the dormitories and move forty-six residents into the community. Dr. Sue Wester, President of the Board, stated, “after discussing what dormitory life is like and what ‘living in your own home’ means to people with mental retardation, there is no decision to make, we must close the dormitories.”



Programs

An enormous undertaking now ensued, demanding extreme effort from staff and residents and their families. There was some dissent. Some parents thought that uprooting residents would be too traumatic. Others felt their family members would be more vulnerable to abuse in smaller homes, or that they might not get skilled care. Still others thought the homes would cost too much.

Roger Deneen explained that in a home the whole setting was quieter, more reserved, and that residents would imitate the staff, the neighbors and the people around them. In community, he argued, Hammer's goals of community interaction, personal fulfillment, independence, self-confidence and productivity could be achieved.

purchased in

1980's

"Growing and developing as a person, living and working with people who are caring and supportive, being able to enjoy a decent home, a rewarding job, friends and good times are necessary components of a high quality of life which should be available to everyone."

Roger Deneen

The state did not offer any money toward the start-up costs for the project. Hammer began a capital campaign to fund the community homes and to remodel and furnish group homes and apartments. The campaign was also to provide for converting the dormitories to alternative use. Two and one-half million dollars was sought. "Downsizing" was to take eighteen months.

According to Jim Ryberg, Director of Environmental Services, Hammer opened a new home every three weeks. Each home took about three months to renovate and license. Residents and staff moved in on a Friday so they would have the weekend to get oriented. *The attached folder of homes in the back of this brochure with opening dates and places shows the magnitude of the effort.*



The transition was difficult. The resident counselors went

through many schedule changes not knowing for many months with whom

they would be working. The maintenance crew moved furniture, readied houses for occupancy and dealt with everyone from housing inspectors to people changing their minds about who was going to live where. The program managers communicated the changes to parents, residents, staff and social workers. They had to defend, explain, listen, understand and then a week later start all over again. The bookkeeping staff

worked many extra hours changing over the system from manual to computer, putting together contracts, then adding many changes to these contracts. Betty Pederson and other nurses' busy schedules became more hectic with additional meetings and endless paperwork. Support staff picked up extra duties and challenges. It was a difficult time but everyone involved felt the pride of accomplishment.

THE JOURNEY OF DOWNSIZING

Back in the year of our Lord, 1987, a decree went forth from the Hammer Board of Directors, saying, "Go ye out from this dormitory setting and spread out to the promised land of Plymouth, Minnetonka and Wayzata, Minnesota, where food and water are plentiful and people are friendly."

The support staff at Hammer Residences stepped back in fear and with trembling voices crying out, "But how?" The calm reassuring voice from above returned once again, saying, "I don't know, it's never been done before and stop asking questions. However, we will give to you righteous and good people who will assist on this journey to the promised land. We shall give you a leader with vision and his name shall be called Roger. We shall give you a man of calm and reason who shall look out for the residents' welfare and you will call him Tim. We shall give you a money changer, who will make silver stretch like the Nile and who shall fill out reports until the camels cometh home and you will call her Marlene. We shall give you a select group of people who will help in all things that are good and honest and you will call them program managers: you will also call them often. We will give to your maintenance and janitorial people the power to do the work of 10 people each. They shall not weep because of long and hard hours. They will go to their duties with smiles, but sometimes be caught up in utter disbelief of their orders. We shall give to you a group of direct care staff that will be overflowing with patience and a willingness to put up with all of the changes. But best of all we shall give to you residents who will warm all your hearts with their joy and happiness at their new homes in the promised land."

Jim Ryberg
Director of Environmental Services
December, 1990

Hammer's population expands – C

People



Roger Deneen resigned in 1992. Hammer's "down-sizing" could not have been realized without the commitment that Mr. Deneen felt for this project and his close working relationship with government staff members at the state and county levels. Tim Nelson, Director of Program Services, stated that Roger Deneen's leadership benefited both the people at Hammer and those in other agencies. Hammer's example encouraged other administrators to attempt similar changes.

"Hammer Residences is very fortunate to have this caliber of dedicated and committed individuals serving its residents."

Roger Deneen

Places

On August 1, 1989, Hammer entered into an agreement with the Minnesota Department of Human Services to provide residential and program services for twenty-four additional individuals. Hammer Residences now offers individualized services to people with many types of disabilities including cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, epilepsy and head injuries.

Hammer continues to make adaptations to the new way of living. An Adopt-A-Home program, organized in 1991 by Ann Barnes, Volunteer Director, finds volunteer groups to participate socially in residents' lives.

Programs



In 1996, a State-of-the-House program was initiated. Residents and their families meet with staff members to discuss successes and problems in each home.

Currently over two hundred volunteers serve in a variety of positions at Hammer. Their jobs range from transporting residents to coaching sports teams to becoming one-on-one companions. The volunteers assist the two hundred twenty-six employees.

Community involvement continues 1990's

Hammer also continues its tradition of progressive service in recreation. Under the leadership of Recreation/Volunteer Director Fred Witzgall, a variety of programs have been established.

Developmental sports leagues were organized in 1992 by Hammer, the Ridgedale YMCA and West Hennepin Community Services. The leagues currently serve several hundred people in the western suburbs, in basketball and softball, and include players with and without developmental disabilities.

Hammer has produced two feature movies, providing residents with a unique creative experience. In 1988, Hammer's *Wizard of Oz* received an award for the best amateur comedy at the Minnesota Video Convention. *Hammer Trek* was produced in 1996, and previewed by guests at the Hammer Family Day Picnic. Both movies were widely aired on local public television and residents took tremendous pride in their roles.



The Hammer Family Bowling League is held each spring at Aqua Bowl in Minnetonka, and includes residents, staff, family and friends. Aqua Bowl owner Bob Hageman has been a wonderful supporter of Hammer.

Hammer and West Hennepin Community Services co-sponsor monthly dances for people with developmental disabilities in the western suburbs.



Hammer continues to reach out to the community. Each year Hammer attends the James J. Hill Days parade, Wayzata's hometown celebration. Holy Name of Jesus Parish of Medina received an award in 1994 from the National Apostolate for Persons with Mental Retardation. They provide a variety of services for Hammer residents who worship there. Residents lead a year-end liturgy at Holy Name every year.

Celebrities give benefit performance Technology now a major comm

People



Juanita Ernhart, Associate Director of Development, plans special fundraisers and dinners. Roger Erickson from WCCO radio, Sid Hartman from the *Star Tribune*, Lake Wobegon's favorite son, Garrison Keillor, former Twins all-star Tony Oliva all have given benefit performances on behalf of Hammer Residences.

Juanita is assisted by the Hammer Residences Fund Board, begun in 1982. The Fund's mission is to provide financial support to the programs and activities

of Hammer. Specific funds are raised for the quality of life fund, helping residents of Hammer lead a more fulfilling life. The Fund also supports the education grant program, started by CEO Jon Thompson, giving employees

the opportunity to further their education. In addition, funds are raised for capital improvements and purchases, computerization and in-kind goods and services. The Annual Raffle and Dinner is dedicated toward Fund expenses.

Places



The Ink Spot (formerly the *Grapevine*, started by Tim Nelson, Director of Programs), Hammer's internal newsletter, started in 1993. This monthly publication provides a forum for staff and residents to communicate.

Programs



Ink Spot

NOVEMBER 1997

VACATIONING IN HOLLAND

by Fred Worthing

During the last two weeks of September, my wife, Tina and I enjoyed life in The Netherlands. It was great to think, speak and read in Dutch again. We took in the Dutch history which presents an amazing variety. The people of Holland have learned to use the available space to the best advantage. The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, yet because of careful planning, a lot of space is available for nature and recreation, protected from urban sprawl. When our aircraft came in for a landing at the airport, we were amazed the Dutch built their cities below their meadows and green fields lay spread out.

Driving a car in Holland is a real challenge on the main roads and especially on the smaller roads. The traffic is frequent and fast, and it is a real challenge to drive. The traffic is frequent and fast, and it is a real challenge to drive. The traffic is frequent and fast, and it is a real challenge to drive.

The evening we watched a baseball game on Dutch TV of a prize winner of the big, famous Dutch club. What made this special to us was that the per-

formance were people with developmental disabilities. How happy they were and what enthusiasm they displayed. Perhaps you would have enjoyed seeing that program.

When we were signing, we noticed our relationships. We are not relatives and friends. The most interesting part of our stay was the "Working family day." We had joined this with the help of a photo and video camera. Some forty persons got together for a social time. We know that good relationships make life great. That takes time and a lot of people. We are not relatives and friends. The most interesting part of our stay was the "Working family day." We had joined this with the help of a photo and video camera. Some forty persons got together for a social time. We know that good relationships make life great. That takes time and a lot of people.

I like history. While we were in Holland, I had a wonderful time about Prince Maurits, the leader of the first "Reformation" of Holland. William of Orange, Holland's first king, was the first to bring the "Reformation" to Holland. He was the first to bring the "Reformation" to Holland. He was the first to bring the "Reformation" to Holland.

more inside

- Twins Cities Marathon
- In the Side With
- Denise Newell
- Outstanding Employee
- Nominations
- Rosalia Says HI
- Goodbye from Tyler Staff
- Resident Ron Holmstrom
- Thank You to K&L
- Meet the Staff
- Golden Harvest Team
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- A Request From Fred
- Lakeville News
- Hammer Family Announcement
- From the Recreation Department
- Happy Birthday
- Yak Springs
- Hammer's 75th Celebration
- Referral Books

FOR HAMMER RESIDENCES EMPLOYEES
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ances for fundraising events – communication tool

1990's

Jon Thompson, current CEO, brought to Hammer a wealth of experience when he came in 1991. He had a strong background in health care and care of the developmentally disabled, beginning years before at Faribault State Hospital where he knew several of Hammer's current residents.

Jon's initial major focus, beginning in 1991, was to stabilize Hammer financially and to continue implementing a model of management that would bring strength to the house level. The management model resulted in the positions of program manager and assistant program manager, program director and continuous improvement director. Policies and procedures were revised. Program managers were allowed to run the daily operations at the homes.

During 1994-1995, Hammer participated in the continued downsizing of Faribault Regional Treatment Center. This resulted in the development of two new homes and eight more people being served by Hammer. Bill Bieber, President of the Fund Board of Directors, spearheaded a capital funds campaign, "Fulfilling Our Vision," and raised over \$400,000 to develop these homes. Also during this period, Hammer began to look at ways to enable people to age in place. The McGlinch home was moved off the campus and the new McGlinch was the first home to be fully handicapped accessible. Hammer also bought its first duplex and in this setting started its new method of serving persons with behavior problems.



Presently, Hammer has moved into the use of technology for communications and management. Funds were raised for the purchase of computers. James Carpenter, Information Systems Director, spent endless hours setting up this system.

E-mail, a web page and the beginnings of a Hammer intranet have all been implemented. E-mail links between Hennepin County and Hammer have been established.

"As I look into the future, I see technology and partnerships as important components of how we will deliver programs and services to people with developmental disabilities. We will form partnerships with other providers to broaden living, working and recreational opportunities. We will use technology to enhance the delivery of services so we may expand and make more flexible the opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to grow and develop. We will do this in an atmosphere that concentrates on the wants and desires of the individual."

Jon Thompson

Our Vision, Mission, Values and Principles

Our Vision

Quality Services, Quality Experience, Quality in Life

Our Mission

We will respond to the uniqueness of individuals with creative supports and innovative services that enable them to live in and contribute to their community.

Our Values

Empowerment, Quality, Service, Joy, Learning, Pride and Stewardship

Our Principles

The principles that underlie and support the implementation of the Vision, Mission and Values of Hammer are:

We will focus on a person's ability, not disability.

All individuals served have intrinsic value. We will support their needs and encourage them to grow. We will allow individuals to take reasonable risks and perhaps fail, in an effort to learn. Our language and communication will emphasize ability, high expectations and humanity, not disability.

Individuals will actively plan their futures.

We will educate individuals in an effort to assist them in making informed choices. People with disabilities can exercise personal rights and responsibilities unless those rights are legally limited. Staff members will encourage individuals to speak up for themselves. Community contributions and interdependence will be promoted.

We will provide cost-effective living arrangements that meet the needs and desires of the people we serve in settings that are a reflection of the communities in which they live.

Hammer will involve the people we serve in the planning and decisions regarding where and with whom they will live. We will provide housing that closely reflects the values and styles of the community where the person resides. We will utilize technology wherever reasonable to improve our efficiency in operation and allow people even greater autonomy in their homes. We will encourage the people we serve to be as actively involved in the upkeep of their homes as possible in order to teach the responsibility of community life and to develop a greater sense of pride and ownership in their homes.

We will strive to be an organization that is: ethical in its business practices; respectful of staff, residents, families, guardians, conservators and professionals in the field; a promoter of new ideas; fiscally responsible; and, an asset to the communities in which it is located.

The management and board of directors will operate Hammer using business practices that are a credit to the organization. All individuals will be treated with respect and are to treat each other with respect. Residents will live in an environment which provides positive role models. Hammer will be an innovator. New ideas will be fostered and valued. Fiscal integrity will be promoted. Finally, Hammer will maintain its homes and property so it will be a credit to the communities in which homes or services are located.

A Special Thanks!

Over the 75 year history of Hammer, there have been many dedicated and caring staff. Hammer wishes to take this opportunity to thank them for their numerous distinguished contributions which have helped make Hammer the outstanding organization it is today.

Hammer Residences would like to provide special recognition to the following employees who have given five years or more of continuous service at Hammer. Their care and dedication has helped make a positive difference in the lives of the people we serve.

20+ Years of Service

Rose Rizzi
Jim Ryberg
Don Kinney
Judy Klein
Sue Walker
Maggie Starr-Knox
Tim Nelson
Kim Hansen

15-20 Years of Service

Walter Lentz
Kathy Hendrickson
Pam Andresen
Nancy Jackson
Kim Wickstrom
Joyce Klemz
Cate Saracen-Peters
Barb Matter
Mary Lou Loacker
Missy Swanson
Martha Oie
Ellen Timmerman-Borer
Fred Witzgall
Kay Busch
Jill Kunze
Sharon Knodel

10-15 Years of Service

Sue Souther
Brad Fenske
Joanne Moore
James VanMeveren
Lisbeth Armstrong
D. Christeson-Glover
Cindy Johnson
James Carpenter
Becky Treb

10-15 Years of Service (con't)

Juanita Ernhart
Karen McGowan
Peter Wiering
Don Thompson
Dianne Berg
Bruce Bondhus
Patty Swan
Wendy Mattera
Mary Desantis

5-10 Years of Service

Susan Holovnia
Ruthann Ryberg
Brian Johnson
Wendy Smith
Ed Calph
Joanie Giesseman
Patty Opal
Amanda Herman
Laurie Foster
Kathy Wolfbauer
Dennis Deppa
Greg Clark
John Hauwiller
Jan Hopper
Rob Peters
Tim Eshelman
Jay Butler
Patty Putnam
Dwight Wiering
Joan Boerschinger
Calvin Whitmore
Dan Bottiger
Mary Rutkowski
Mary Wojahn
Scott Lec

5-10 Years of Service (con't)

Ed Egler
Bradley Perry
Jacqueline Reay
Lynn Johnson
Diane Peterson
John Vollmar
Tammy Delfun
Ken Harper
Faith Peterson
Rosalie Sitzmann
Nancy Vader
Joe Carr
Donna Carr
Ann Lichty
Kurt Meyer
Janice VanMeveren
Joanne Carlson
Carolyn Thompson
Joanne Smith
Janet Bast
Jon Thompson
Phelom Silva-Bryant
Susanne Christensen
Kathy Hanley
Cara Dagenais
Paul Kerngard
Doreen Neshiem
Katie Schmitz
Julie Bruner-daSilva
Cynthia Nelson
Heather Roberts
Valerie Kelley
Michael Bryant
Mark Olson
Sandra Barnett
Kristen Botten

Thank You for Seventy-Five Years

This "Story of Hammer" covers seventy-five years of struggle, vision, creative leadership and compassionate love for our residents. Hundreds of dedicated staff, board members, volunteers and parents have shared their love since 1923. Their caring held Hammer together in the early years and launched exciting growth after World War II.

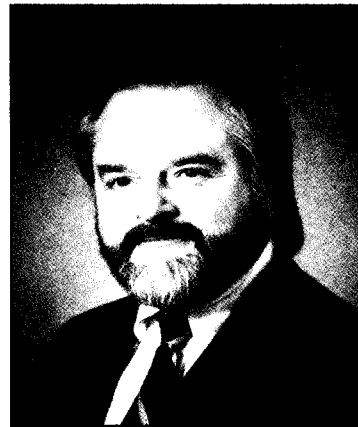
Hammer's friends can take deep pride in always being in the forefront of positive change for individuals with mental retardation. Creative schooling, challenging job opportunities, independent living and assistance in the start of Arc nationwide in 1946 are but a few milestones.

We believe seventy-five years of service is significant. We hope this booklet celebrates the important people, places and programs for this unique institution.

I want to express appreciation to everyone who has contributed to this effort. Individuals who gathered pictures and documents and wrote these stories have shaped this book to prevent the story from being lost.

The board, staff and residents want to thank you for your loyal support. We pray that Hammer will continue to serve this vital concept and our appreciative residents.

Jon Thompson
Chief Executive Officer





**Bringing Quality of Life
to the People We Serve**



Hammer Residences, Inc.

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